

Message Text

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ORIGIN COA-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 L-03 DLOS-06 EB-11 SCI-06 INT-08

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 058485

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS TPHY PBOR XN

SUBJECT: DRILLSHIP GLOMAR CHALLENGER

REF: A) BUENOS AIRES 1551, B) STATE 17134

1. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES GLOMAR CHALLENGER REMAIN AS REF B. GIVEN FACT ENTIRE DRILL PROJECT HAS BEEN ORIENTED TOWARD DEEPER PORTIONS OCEAN FLOOR SINCE INCEPTION, IT IS NOT RPT NOT THOUGHT DESIRABLE TO DISRUPT VESSEL'S PROGRAM TO EXTENT NECESSARY TO PERMIT DEPT TO SEEK GOA APPROVAL, I.E. SELECT DRILL SITE ON ARGENTINE SHELF AND/OR WITHIN 3 MILES TERRITORIAL SEA. DRILLING AT SUCH SITE WOULD BE VIRTUALLY USELESS TO PROGRAM. VESSEL WILL DEPART USHUAIA AFTER RESUPPLY AND PERSONNEL CHANGE O/A APRIL 3, ARRIVING RIO DE JANEIRO MAY 29 AT CONCLUSION LEG 36. DRILL OPERATIONS SCHEDULED FIRST TWO SITES DRAKE PASSAGE (56.7 SOUTH 65.25 WEST AND 57.7 SOUTH 62.6 WEST) APRIL 4 THRU 9. INFLAMMATORY LOCAL PRESS ASIDE, VESSEL'S PROGRAM AIMED
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AT UNDERSTANDING ORIGINS AND HISTORY SUBMARINE FEATURES OF

DEEP OCEAN (E.G. SCOTIA ARC AND ARGENTINE BASIN) NOT
HYDROCARBON PROSPECTING. FYI WATER DEPTH FIRST TWO SITES
APPROXIMATELY 3700 METERS; SCIENTISTS HOPE FOR 500 METER
PENETRATION. SHOALES OF 9 SITES IS 1660 METERS. END FYI

2. NSF HAS REPORTED DIFFICULTIES WITH FUELING REQUIRE-
MENTS. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS IN ANY WAY RE-
LATED TO ANY OFFICIAL GOA PIQUE OVER CHALLENGER OPERATIONS.
ARRANGEMENTS MADE THIS JANUARY TO OBTAIN 400,000 GALLONS
LIGHT MARINE DIESEL AT USHUAIA FOR VESSEL. AGENT (SR. J.
BONFIGLIA OF S.A. IMPORTADORA Y EXPORTADORA PATAGONIA)
GIVEN CHECK FOR \$US 103,000 WHICH WAS THEN TURNED OVER TO
YPF MARINE BUNKER SECTION. WHILE VESSEL IS PRIVATELY
OWNED, THIS MONEY USG FUNDS, AND ENTIRE PROJECT UNDER USG
CONTRACTS. AGENT NOW REPORTS FUEL WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE
AT USHUAIA, BUT MAY POSSIBLY BE OBTAINED AT MAR DEL PLATA.
NSF FEELS THIS TOO FAR TO BE FEASIBLE. IMPERATIVE VESSEL
OBTAIN AT LEAST 100,000 GALS BEFORE START LEG 36, AND THEY
COULD GO AS FAR AS COMODORO RIVADAVIA TO GET IT. RE-
QUEST POST BE PREPARED TO ASSIST VESSEL'S AGENT IN LOCATING
FUEL. KISSINGER

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